

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION

SALLY J. DOWDEN, et al.,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	
v.)	No. 06 C 6505
)	
C.H. ROBINSON WORLDWIDE, INC.,)	
)	
Defendant.)	
_____)	
BETH SHAW, et al.,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	
v.)	No. 06 C 6526
)	
C.H. ROBINSON WORLDWIDE, INC.,)	
)	
Defendant.)	
_____)	
CLAUDIA ALICIA MARTINEZ, et al.,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	
v.)	No. 06 C 6562
)	
C.H. ROBINSON WORLDWIDE, INC.,)	
)	
Defendant.)	
_____)	
AMELIA M. ALFARO, et al.,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	
v.)	No. 06 C 6570
)	
C.H. ROBINSON WORLDWIDE, INC.,)	
)	
Defendant.)	
_____)	

MEMORANDUM ORDER

No fewer than five cases asserting Fair Labor Standards Act claims against C.H. Robinson Worldwide, Inc. ("Robinson")--part of a large group of like cases recently brought against the same defendant in this District Court--have been assigned at random to this Court's calendar. From the five Complaints it appears that a single action against Robinson had been the subject of a conditional class action certification in the District of Minnesota, which after well over three years' pendency ended with a decertification on September 27, 2006.¹ With the strands of the former class action having been thus separated, plaintiffs' counsel have--inexplicably, so far as this Court can see at first blush--opted for filings in this forum despite its apparent lack of relationship to any plaintiffs' claims.

This Court has understandably not troubled itself to examine all of the myriad cases that have since been filed in this

¹ Shades of T.S. Eliot's The Hollow Men:

This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper.

judicial district. Suffice it to say that not one of the 18 plaintiffs in these cases was employed by Robinson in this judicial district. Instead two were employed in Des Moines, Iowa, three in Orlando, Florida, two in Laredo, Texas, ten in Ft. Wayne, Indiana and one in Sacramento, California. As for Robinson itself, it is a Delaware corporation with its principal place of business in Eden Prairie, Minnesota.

This Court's colleague Honorable Ruben Castillo has already entered orders transferring all of the Robinson cases that had been assigned to his calendar to the respective districts where the plaintiffs were employed. That action appears to be wholly appropriate, but this Court will not yet enter such orders. Instead it sets a much earlier initial status date than it had originally contemplated--at 8:45 a.m. December 18, 2006--at which time it expects input from the parties' counsel as to why they may or may not believe that this Illinois forum makes sense.



Milton I. Shadur
Senior United States District Judge

Date: December 6, 2006